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CIRCULARS OF INFORMATION

OF THE

BUREAU OF EDUCATION.

No. 1-1877.

REPORTS ON THE SYSTEM OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION IN CHINA.

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WASHINGTON:  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.  
1877.

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# CIRCULARS OF INFORMATION

OF THE

U.S.

## BUREAU OF EDUCATION.

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### ERRATA.

Cover. For "Reports on the system of public instruction in China" read "Education in China."

Title page. For "Report on the system of public instruction in China" read "Education in China."

Page 27. Instead of the second foot note, distinguished by an †, read: "Mr. Yung Wing is an alumnus of Yale College; he received from his alma mater the degree of LL. D. in 1876."

UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON:  
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1877.

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# CIRCULARS OF INFORMATION

OF THE

U. S.

## BUREAU OF EDUCATION.

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No. 1-1877.

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REPORT ON THE SYSTEM OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION IN CHINA.

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## CONTENTS.

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	Page.
Letter of the Commissioner of Education to the Secretary of the Interior.....	5
Letter of Hon. Benjamin P. Avery to the Commissioner.....	7
Letter of Dr. Peter Parker to the Commissioner.....	8
EDUCATION IN CHINA :	
1. Influence on national character.....	11
2. Home education .....	12
3. Commencement of school life.....	13
4. Stages of study.....	15
5. Grades of schools.....	19
6. System of examinations .....	22
APPENDIX :	
Letter of Mr. Yung Wing.....	27
Statement concerning Chinese students in the United States.....	27

1

2

## LETTER.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION,  
*Washington, D. C., June 18, 1877.*

SIR: The accompanying paper on education in China, prepared at the request of the late Hon. Benjamin P. Avery, then United States minister resident at Peking, by Rev. William A. P. Martin, LL. D., president of the Imperial College, Peking, a native of the United States, was furnished to this Office some time since through the courtesy of the Hon. Secretary of State. It has not been printed before from want of sufficient means.

The peculiar fitness of the author to make an authoritative statement in regard to education in China will be generally admitted, while the estimate of the value of this paper expressed by Hon. Peter Parker, M. D., for many years resident in that country, and formerly United States commissioner to that government, will be recognized as the verdict of a competent judge.

The subject is one of great and general interest, not only in view of the increase of Chinese immigration to this country, but also as furnishing a basis for intelligent comparison between such widely divergent civilizations as are represented by the two nations. It may be possible to trace in their system of education the causes that have arrested the further development of a people whose civilization dates from such a remote antiquity, and who were once far in advance of western nations in all knowledge of the arts of civilization. The causes of a result so well defined and so general must be worthy our study if we would avoid falling into a similar error, while the means that at so early a period led a whole people to so high a development and held in unity as a nation so many millions during many centuries, are well worth investigation. The evils resultant from a rigid, uniform, and universal system of training may be noted, and similar mistakes avoided.

In striking contrast with this account of the ancient system of education in China will be found the accompanying statement made by one of the two government commissioners in charge of youth who have been sent by that government to this country to be trained in a knowledge of the science and literature of the western nations.

As of general interest to educators, I recommend the publication of the accompanying documents as a circular of information.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN EATON,  
*Commissioner.*

The Hon. the SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.  
Approved, and publication ordered.

C. SCHURZ,  
*Secretary.*



LETTERS OF HON. BENJ. P. AVERY\* AND DR. PETER PARKER  
TO THE COMMISSIONER.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,  
*Peking, May 28, 1875.*

SIR: Before my departure for China, I received from you a request to secure for use by your Bureau an accurate and full statement of the methods of education in China and "the relation of the methods to the failure of their civilization."

On my arrival at Peking, bearing your request in mind, I was confirmed in the opinion entertained before, that to no one else could I apply for the information desired with so much propriety as to Dr. W. A. P. Martin, our fellow countryman, president of the Imperial College for Western Science, at Peking, whose long residence in China, scholarly knowledge of Chinese literature, and familiar acquaintance with native methods of education must be well known to you.

Dr. Martin, at my solicitation, agreed to furnish a paper on the sub-

\* The sudden death of Mr. Avery, on the 8th of November, 1875, while minister of the United States at Peking, was mourned as a loss not only to his large circle of personal friends, but to the country which he represented so acceptably.

The following estimate of his character and usefulness is taken from the somewhat extended notice of his death which appeared in the *Overland Monthly Magazine* for December, 1875. Mr. Avery was formerly the editor of this magazine, and his influence in California was recognized as ever exerted in the direction of the highest culture:

"Mr. Avery was in many respects a remarkable man. He typified the ripest fruitage of our western thought and culture. He was essentially Californian. \* \* \* Perhaps no one person did so much to educate the people of the State in the right direction, to lift the thoughts of men above the sordid interests of the hour and the mean ambitions of personal gain. He embodied in his life and character that spirit of a broader culture, purer morals, and loftier aims which constitutes the basis of all healthy growth. He loved California with an almost idolatrous love, but lamented its hard materialism and strove to make it more worthy of its great destiny; and he was unwearied in his efforts to elevate and refine. The hours that other workers gave to rest and recreation he devoted to the building up of new æsthetic interests and the study of those gentler arts that uplift society and smooth down the sharp angles of our western life. He was one of those rare men who are estimated rather below than above their true value. \* \* \*

His capacity for work was marvellous. We cannot recall a journalist, with perhaps the exception of the late Henry J. Raymond, who could write so rapidly yet so pointedly and correctly. His well stored mind poured forth its treasures in a rapid flowing copious stream. He was equally ready in all departments of journalistic activity. \* \* \* He is dead; but the seed of thought and culture he has sown has not fallen on barren ground. His work survives him. The interests he promoted and the institutions he helped to found are living monuments of his beneficent activity."

ject you indicated, which I have just received from his hands and now forward to you through the courtesy of the State Department. I scarcely need add that you will find it alike interesting and valuable. In connection with the subject of Dr. Martin's paper, permit me to call your attention to a dispatch written by S. Wells Williams, then chargé d'affaires at this legation, to the State Department, under date of August 26, 1869, numbered 58, and referring to the enormous difficulties of the Chinese language, whether spoken or written, as one of the principal obstacles to the progress of this people. Dr. Martin touches on this point, but it did not enter into his object to enlarge upon it.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

BENJ. P. AVERY.

Hon. JOHN EATON,  
*Commissioner of Education.*

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WASHINGTON, *March 29, 1876.*

SIR: I have perused with care and much interest the paper of Dr. Martin upon the subject of education in China, and regard it as a very able presentation of the past and present state of the various departments of education in the empire.

President Martin enjoys advantages and possesses qualifications (knowledge of the language, literature, laws, and customs of China) surpassed by none for presenting a thorough and accurate knowledge of the subject. Many are the remarkable events of the century just closing; among them, the opening of China and the demolition of her wall of conceit and exclusiveness, more massive than her great northern wall of bricks and cement, stand preëminent. While the astronomer is remapping the heavens and "trapping" in quick succession the hitherto undiscovered planets, and the paleontologist is pursuing his researches in Egypt and Assyria, so the archæologist, for the first time, is opening to the western world the works of men for centuries in and around the forbidden city of the Celestial Empire, and a university modelled after those of the west has been established and is presided over by an eminent American scholar and sinologue.

The observations respecting the system of literary examinations, dating back more than two thousand years, are of special interest, and the change of base in education indicated by the educational mission to this country is of surpassing importance. The statements that "the government will soon perceive the necessity of supplying its people with the means of higher, broader culture than they can derive from the grammar and rhetoric of their own language;" that efforts for the promotion of education are specially encouraged by enlightened magistrates; that recently over three hundred new schools were reported as opened in one department (county) of the province (state) of Canton, taken in

connection with the Chinese educational mission, (which, according to the statement of Mr. Yung Wing, consists of 115 select Chinese youth pursuing a thorough collegiate and scientific education,) are facts of deepest interest. It is difficult to express or conceive the full influence these youth of rare talent and thorough education according to western standards will exert when, returned to their home, they shall become the educators of their people and coadjutors of the government itself.

Yours, truly,

PETER PARKER.

Hon. JOHN EATON,  
*Commissioner of Education.*





## EDUCATION IN CHINA.

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### 1.—INFLUENCE ON NATIONAL CHARACTER.

The interest of the inquiry on which we are about to enter is based on the assumption that differences of national character are mainly due to the influence of education. This we conceive to be true, except in extreme cases, such as those of the inhabitants of torrid or frigid regions, where everything succumbs to the tyranny of physical forces. In such situations, climate shapes education, as, according to Montesquieu, it determines morals and dictates laws. But in milder latitudes the difference of physical surroundings is an almost inappreciable element in the formation of character in comparison with influences of an intellectual and moral kind. Much, for example, is said about the inspiration of mountain scenery—an inspiration felt most sensibly, if not most effectively, by those who see the mountains least frequently—but, as John Foster remarks, the character of a lad brought up at the foot of the Alps is a thousandfold more affected by the companions with whom he associates than by the mountains that rear their heads above his dwelling.

The peculiar character of the Chinese—for they have a character which is one and distinct—is not to be accounted for by their residence in great plains, for half the empire is mountainous. Neither is it to be ascribed to their rice diet, as rice is a luxury in which few of the northern population are able to indulge. Still less is it to be referred to the influence of climate, for they spread over a broad belt in their own country, emigrate in all directions, and flourish in every zone. It is not even explained by the unity and persistency of an original type, for in their earlier career they absorbed and assimilated several other races, while history shows that at different epochs their own character has undergone remarkable changes. The true secret of this phenomenon is the presence of an agency which, under our own eyes, has shown itself sufficiently powerful to transform the turbulent nomadic Mantchoo into the most Chinese of the inhabitants of the Middle Kingdom. The general name for that agency, which includes a thousand elements, is education. It is education that has imparted a uniform stamp to the Chinese under every variety of physical condition; just as the successive sheets of paper applied to an engraving bring away, substantially, the same impression, notwithstanding differences in the quality of the material.

In this wide sense we shall not attempt to treat the subject, though

it may not be out of place to remark that the Chinese themselves employ a word which answers to education with a similar latitude. They say, for instance, that the education of a child begins before its birth. The women of ancient times, say they, in every movement had regard to its effect on the character of their offspring. This they denominate *kiao*, reminding us of what Goethe tells us in his autobiography of certain antecedents, which had their effect in imparting to him

"That concord of harmonious powers which forms the soul of happiness."

All this, whatever its value, belongs to physical discipline. We shall not go so far back in the history of our typical Chinese, but, confining ourselves strictly to the department of intellectual influences, take him at the time when the young idea first begins to shoot, and trace him through the several stages of his development until he emerges a full fledged academician.\*

## 2.—HOME EDUCATION.

With us the family is the first school. Not only is it there we make the most important of our linguistic acquirements, but with parents who are themselves cultivated there is generally a persistent effort to stimulate the mental growth of their offspring to develop reason, form taste, and invigorate the memory.

In many instances parental vanity applies a spur where the curb ought to be employed, and a sickly precocity is the result; but in general a judicious stimulus addressed to the mind is no detriment to the body, and it is doubtless to the difference of domestic training rather than to race that we are to ascribe the early awaking of the mental powers of European children as compared with those of China. The Chinese have, it is true, their stories of infant precocity—their Barretiers and Chattertons. They tell of Li-muh, who, at the age of seven, was thought worthy of the degree of *tsin-shi*, or the literary doctorate, and of Hie-tsin, the "divine child," who, at the age of ten, composed a volume of poems, still in use as a juvenile text book. But these are not merely exceptions; they are exceptions of rarer occurrence than among us. The generality of Chinese children do not get their hands and feet so soon as ours, because, in the first months of their existence, they are tightly swathed and afterward overloaded with cumbrous garments. The reason for their tardier mental development is quite analogous. European children exhibit more thought at five than Chinese children of twice that age. This is not a partial judgment, nor is the fact to be accounted for by a difference of race; for in mental capacity the Chinese are, in my opinion, not inferior to the "most favored nation." Deprive our nurseries of those speaking pictures that say so

\* For an account of the Hanlin or Imperial Academy, see the North American Review for July, 1874, where much may be found to supplement the present paper. The same periodical (some time in 1870) contains an article by the present writer on "Civil service competitive examinations in China."

much to the infant eye; of infant poems, such as those of Watts and Barbauld; of the sweet music that impresses those poems on the infant mind; more than all, take away those Bible stories and scraps of history which excite a thirst for the books that contain them, and what a check upon mental growth, what a deduction from the happiness of childhood! With us the dawn of knowledge precedes the use of books, as the rays of morning, refracted by the atmosphere and glowing with rosy hues, anticipate the rising of the sun. In China there is no such accommodating medium, no such blushing aurora. The language of the fireside is not the language of the books.

Mothers and nurses are not taught to read; nor are fathers less inclined than with us to leave the work of instruction to be begun by the professional teacher. This they are the more disposed to do, as an ancient maxim, sanctioned by classic authority, prohibits a parent being the instructor of his own children; still some fathers, yielding to better instincts, do take a pride in teaching their infant sons; and some mothers, whose exceptional culture makes them shine like stars in the night of female ignorance, have imparted to their children the first impulse in a literary career.

How many of those who have obtained seats in the literary Olympus were favored with such early advantages, it is impossible to ascertain. That the number is considerable, we cannot doubt. We remember hearing of two scholars in Chekiang who were not only taught the mechanical art of writing but the higher art of composition by an educated mother, both of them winning the honors of the academy.

As another instance of the same kind, the memoirs of the academy embalm the memory of such a noble mother, along with the name of her illustrious son, the Emperor Kienlung, with vermilion pencil, celebrating the talents of the one and the virtues of the other.

Dropping the "meed of a melodious tear" on the grave of an eminent literary servant, Chien-chén-keun, a member of the Hanlin, the Emperor says: "He drew his learning from a hidden source: a virtuous mother imparting to him her classic lore." In the prose obituary prefixed to the verses, His Majesty says: "Chien's mother, Lady Chén, was skilled in ornamental writing. In his boyhood it was she who inspired and directed his studies. He had a painting which represented his mother as holding the distaff and at the same time explaining to him the classic page. I admired it, and inscribed on it a complimentary verse."

A graceful tribute from an exalted hand, worth more in the estimation of the Chinese than all the marble or granite that might be heaped upon her sepulchre.

### 3.—COMMENCEMENT OF SCHOOL LIFE.

In general, however, a Chinese home is not a hotbed for the development of mind. Nature is left to take her own time, and the child vegetates until he completes his seventh or eighth year. The almanac is

then consulted, and a lucky day chosen for inducting the lad into a life of study. Clad in festal robe, with tasselled cap, and looking a mandarin in small, he sets out for the village school, his face beaming with the happy assurance that all the stars are shedding kindly influence and his friends predicting that he will end his career in the Imperial Academy. On entering the room he performs two acts of worship: the first is to prostrate himself before a picture of the Great Sage, who is venerated as the fountain of wisdom, but is not supposed to exercise over his votaries anything like a tutelar supervision. The second is to salute with the same forms, and almost equal reverence, the teacher who is to guide his inexperienced feet in the pathway to knowledge. In no country is the office of teacher more revered. Not only is the living instructor saluted with forms of profoundest respect, but the very name of teacher, taken in the abstract, is an object of almost idolatrous homage. On certain occasions it is inscribed on a tablet in connection with the characters for heaven, earth, prince, and parents, as one of the five chief objects of veneration, and worshipped with solemn rites. This is a relic of the primitive period, when books were few and the student dependent for everything on the oral teaching of his sapient master. In those days, in Eastern as well as Western Asia and Greece, schools were peripatetic, or (as Jeremy Taylor says of the church in his time) ambulatory. Disciples were wont to attend their master by day and night, and follow him on his peregrinations from state to state, in order to catch and treasure up his most casual discourses.

As to the pursuit of knowledge, they were at a great disadvantage, compared with modern students, whose libraries contain books by the thousand, while their living teachers are counted by the score. Yet, the student life of those days was not without its compensating circumstances. Practical morality, the formation of character, was the great object, intellectual discipline being deemed subordinate, and in such a state of society physical culture was, of course, not neglected. The personal character of the teacher made a profound impression on his pupils, inspiring them with ardor in the pursuit of virtue; while the necessity of learning by question and answer excited a spirit of inquiry, and favored originality of thought. But now all this is changed, and the names and forms continue without the reality.

A man who never had a dozen thoughts in all his life sits in the seat of the philosophers and receives with solemn ceremony the homage of his disciples. And why not? For every step in the process of teaching is fixed by unalterable usage. So much is this the case, that in describing one school I describe all, and in tracing the steps of one student I point out the course of all; for in China there are no new methods or short roads.

In other countries, a teacher, even in the primary course, finds room for tact and originality. In those who dislike study, a love of it is to be inspired by making "knowledge pleasant to the taste;" and the dull

apprehension is to be awakened by striking and apt illustrations, while, to the eager and industrious, steps to Parnassus are, if not made easy, at least to be pointed out so clearly that they shall waste no strength in climbing by wrong paths. In China there is nothing of this. The land of uniformity, all processes in arts and letters are as much fixed by universal custom as is the cut of their garments or the mode of wearing their hair. The pupils all tread the path trodden by their ancestors of a thousand years ago, nor has it grown smoother by the attrition of so many feet.

#### 4.—STAGES OF STUDY.

The undergraduate course may be divided into three stages, in each of which there are two leading studies:

In the first the occupations of the student are committing to memory (not reading) the canonical books and writing an infinitude of diversely formed characters, as a manual exercise.

In the second, they are the translation of his text books (*i. e.*, reading) and lessons in composition.

In the third, they are belles lettres and the composition of essays.

Nothing could be more dreary than the labors of the first stage. The pupil comes to school, as one of his books tells him, "a rough gem, that requires grinding;" but the process is slow and painful. His books are in a dead language, for in every part of the empire the style of literary composition is so far removed from that of the vernacular speech that books when read aloud are unintelligible even to the ear of the educated, and the sounds of their characters convey absolutely no meaning to the mind of a beginner. Nor, as a general thing, is any effort made to give them life by imparting glimpses of their signification. The whole of this first stage is a dead lift of memory, unalleviated by the exercise of any other faculty. It is something like what we should have in our western schools if our youth were restricted to the study of Latin as their sole occupation and required to stow away in their memory the contents of the principal classics before learning a word of their meaning.

The whole of the four books and the greater part of the five classics are usually gone through in this manner, four or five years being allotted to the cheerless task. During all this time the mind has not been enriched by a single idea. To get words at the tongue's end and characters at the pencil's point is the sole object of this initial discipline. It would seem, indeed, as if the wise ancients who devised it had dreaded nothing so much as early development, and, like prudent horticulturists, resorted to this method for the purpose of heaping snow and ice around the roots of the young plant to guard against its premature blossoming. All the arrangements of the system are admirably adapted to form a safeguard against precocity. Even the stimulus of companionship in study is usually denied, the advantages resulting from the

formation of classes being as little appreciated as those of other labor saving machinery. Each pupil reads and writes alone, the penalty for failure being so many blows with the ferule or kneeling for so many minutes on the rough brick pavement which serves for a floor.

At this period fear is the strongest motive addressed to the mind of the scholar; nor is it easy to say how large a share this stern discipline has in giving him his first lesson in political duty, viz, that of unquestioning submission, and in rendering him cringing and pliant toward official superiors. Those sallies of innocent humor and venial mischief so common in western schools are rarely witnessed in China.

A practical joke in which the scholars indulged at the expense of their teacher I have seen represented in a picture, but never in real life. The picture, the most graphic I ever saw from a Chinese pencil, adorns the walls of a monastery at the Western Hills, near Peking. It represents a village school, the master asleep in his chair and the pupils playing various pranks, the least of which, if the tyrant should happen to awake, would bring down his terrible baton. But notwithstanding the danger to which they expose themselves, two of the young unterrified stand behind the throne, threatening to awake the sleeper by tickling his ear with the tail of a scorpion.

So foreign indeed is this scene from the habits of Chinese schoolboys, that I feel compelled to take it in a mystic rather than a literal signification. The master is reason, the boys are the passions, and the scorpion conscience. If passion gets at the ear of the soul while reason sleeps, the stings of conscience are sure to follow those

"Pangs that pay joy's spendthrift thrill  
With bitter usury."

Thus understood it conveys a moral alike worthy of Christian or Buddhist ethics. Severity is accounted the first virtue in a pedagogue; and its opposite is not kindness, but negligence. In family schools, where the teacher is well watched, he is reasonably diligent and sufficiently severe to satisfy the most exacting of his patrons. In others, and particularly in charity schools, the portrait of Squeers in Nicholas Nickleby would be no caricature. With modifications and improvements in the curriculum, a teacher has nothing to do. His business is to keep the mill going, and the time honored argument *à posteriori* is the only persuasion he cares to appeal to.

This arctic winter of monotonous toil once passed, a more auspicious season dawns on the youthful understanding. The key of the cabala which he has been so long and so blindly acquiring is put into his hands. He is initiated in the translation and exposition of those sacred books which he had previously stored away in his memory, as if apprehensive lest another tyrant of *Tsin* might attempt their destruction. The light however is let in but sparingly, as it were, through chinks and rifts in the long dark passage. A simple character here and there is explained, and then, it may be after the lapse of a year or two, the

teacher proceeds to the explication of entire sentences. Now for the first time the mind of the student begins to take in the *thoughts* of those he has been taught to regard as the oracles of wisdom. His dormant faculties wake into sudden life, and, as it would seem, unfold the more rapidly in consequence of their protracted hibernation.

To him it is like

"The glorious hour when spring goes forth  
O'er the bleak mountains of the shadowy north,  
And with one radiant glance, one magic breath,  
Wakes all things lovely from the sleep of death."

The value of this exercise can hardly be overestimated. When judiciously employed it does for the Chinese what translation into and out of the dead languages of the west does for us. It calls into play memory, judgment, taste, and gives him a command of his own vernacular which, it is safe to assert, he would never acquire in any other way. Yet even here I am not able to bestow unqualified commendation. This portion of the course is rendered too easy; as much too easy as the preceding is too difficult. Instead of requiring a lad, dictionary in hand, to quarry out the meaning of his author, the teacher reads the lesson for him and demands of him nothing more than a faithful reproduction of that which he has received; memory again, sheer memory! Desirable as this method might be for beginners, when continued, as the Chinese do through the whole course, it has the inevitable effect of impairing independence of judgment and fertility of invention; qualities for which Chinese scholars are by no means remarkable and for the deficiency of which they are no doubt indebted to this error of school room discipline. Simultaneously with translation the student is initiated in the art of composition, an art which, in any language, yields to nothing but practice. In Chinese it is beset with difficulties of a peculiar kind. In the majority of cultivated languages the syntax is governed by rules, while inflections, like mortise and tenon, facilitate the structure of the sentence.

Not so in this most primitive form of human speech. Verbs and nouns are undistinguished by any difference of form, the verb having no voice, mood, or tense, and the noun neither gender, number, nor person. Collocation is everything: it creates the parts of speech and determines the signification of characters. The very simplicity of the linguistic structure thus proves a source of difficulty, preventing the formation of any such systems of grammatical rules as abound in most inflected languages, and throwing the burden of acquisition on the imitative faculty; the problem being not the erection of a fabric from parts which are adjusted and marked, but the building of an arch with cobble stones.

If these uniform, unclassified atoms were indifferent to position, the labor of arrangement would be nothing and style impossible. But most of them appear to be endowed with a kind of mysterious polarity, which controls their collocation and renders them incapable of companionship except with certain characters, the choice of which would



seem to be altogether arbitrary. The origin of this peculiarity it is not difficult to discover. In this, as in other things among the Chinese, usage has become law. Combinations which were accidental or optional with the model writers of antiquity, and even their errors, have, to their imitating posterity, become the *jus et norma loquendi*. Free to move upon each other when the language was young and in a fluid state, its elements have now become crystallized into invariable forms. To master this preëstablished harmony, without the aid of rules, is the fruit of practice and the labor of years.

The first step in composition is the yoking together of double characters. The second is the reduplication of these binary compounds and the construction of parallels—an idea which runs so completely through the whole of Chinese literature that the mind of the student requires to be imbued with it at the very outset. This is the way he begins: The teacher writes, "wind blows," the pupil adds, "rain falls;" the teacher writes, "rivers are long," the pupil adds, "seas are deep," or "mountains are high," &c.

From the simple subject and predicate, which in their rude grammar they describe as "dead" and "living" characters, the teacher conducts his pupil to more complex forms, in which qualifying words and phrases are introduced. He gives as a model some such phrase as "The Emperor's grace is vast as heaven and earth," and the lad matches it by "The Sovereign's favor is profound as lake and sea." These couplets often contain two propositions in each member, accompanied by all the usual modifying terms; and so exact is the symmetry required by the rules of the art that not only must noun, verb, adjective, and particle respond to each other with scrupulous exactness, but the very tones of the characters are adjusted to each other with the precision of music.

Begun with the first strokes of his untaught pencil, the student, whatever his proficiency, never gets beyond the construction of parallels. When he becomes a member of the institute or a minister of the imperial cabinet, at classic festivals and social entertainments, the composition of impromptu couplets, formed on the old model, constitutes a favorite pastime. Reflecting a poetic image from every syllable, or concealing the keen point of a cutting epigram, they afford a fine vehicle for sallies of wit; and poetical contests such as that of Melibœus and Menalcas are in China matters of daily occurrence.

If a present is to be given, on the occasion of a marriage, a birthday, or any other remarkable occasion, nothing is deemed so elegant or acceptable as a pair of scrolls inscribed with a complimentary distich.

When the novice is sufficiently exercised in the "parallels" for the idea of symmetry to have become an instinct, he is permitted to advance to other species of composition which afford freer scope for his faculties. Such are the *shotiah*, in which a single thought is expanded in simple language, the *lun*, the formal discussion of a subject more or less extended, and epistles addressed to imaginary persons and adapted to all

conceivable circumstances. In these last, the forms of the "complete letter writer" are copied with too much servility; but in the other two, substance being deemed of more consequence than form, the new fledged thought is permitted to essay its powers and to expatiate with but little restraint.

In the third stage, composition is the leading object, reading being wholly subsidiary. It takes for the most part the artificial form of verse, and of a kind of prose called *wen-chang*, which is, if possible, still more artificial. The reading required embraces mainly rhetorical models and sundry anthologies. History is studied, but only that of China, and that only in compends; not for its lessons of wisdom, but for the sake of the allusions with which it enables a writer to embellish classic essays. The same may be said of other studies; knowledge and mental discipline are at a discount and style at a premium. The goal of the long course, the flower and fruit of the whole system, is the *wen-chang*; for this alone can insure success in the public examinations for the civil service, in which students begin to adventure soon after entering on the third stage of their preparatory course.

The examinations we reserve for subsequent consideration, and in that connection we shall notice the *wen-chang* more at length. We may however remark in passing that to propose such an end as the permanent object of pursuit must of necessity have the effect of rendering education superficial. In our own universities surface is aimed at rather than depth; but what, we may ask, besides an empty glitter would remain, if none of our students aspired to anything better than to become popular newspaper writers! Yet successful essayists and penny-a-liners require as a preparation for their functions a substratum of solid information. They have to exert themselves to keep abreast of an age in which great facts and great thoughts vibrate instantaneously throughout a hemisphere. But the idea of progressive knowledge is alien to the nature of the *wen-chang*. A juster parallel for the intense and fruitless concentration of energy on this species of composition is the passion for Latin verse, which was dominant in our halls of learning until dethroned by the rise of modern science.

##### 5.—GRADES OF SCHOOLS.

The division of the undergraduate course into the three stages which we have described gives rise to three classes of schools: the primary, in which little is attended to beyond memoriter recitation and imitative chirography; the middle, in which the canonical books are expounded; and the classical, in which composition is the leading exercise. Not unfrequently all three departments are embraced in one and the same school; and still more frequently the single department professed is so neglected as to render it utterly abortive for any useful purpose. This, as we have elsewhere intimated, is particularly the case with what are called public schools. National schools there are none, with the exception

of those at the capital for the education of the Bannermen, originally established on a liberal scale, but now so neglected that they can scarcely be reckoned among existing institutions.

A further exception may be made in favor of schools opened in various places by provincial officers for special purposes; but it is still true that China has nothing approaching to a system of common schools designed to diffuse among the masses the blessings of a popular education. Indeed, education is systematically left to private enterprise and public charity; the government contenting itself with gathering the choicest fruits and encouraging production by suitable rewards. A government that does this cannot be accused of neglecting the interests of education, though the beneficial influence of such patronage seldom penetrates to the lower strata of society.

Even higher institutions, those that bear the name of colleges, are for the most part left to shift for themselves on the same principle. Such colleges differ little from schools of the middle and higher class, except in the number of professors and students; the professors, however numerous, teaching nothing but the Chinese language, and the students, however long they may remain in the institution, studying nothing but the Chinese language. Colleges in the modern sense, as institutions in which the several sciences are taught by men who are specially expert, are, as yet, almost unknown. But there is reason to believe that the government will soon perceive the necessity of supplying its people with the means of a higher, broader culture than they can derive from the grammar and rhetoric of their own language.

In establishing and contributing to the support of schools, the gentry are exceedingly liberal; but they are not always careful to see that their schools are conducted in an efficient manner. In China nothing flourishes without the stimulus of private interest. Accordingly, all who can afford to do so endeavor to employ private instructors for their own families; and where a single family is unable to meet the expense, two or three of the same clan or family name are accustomed to club together for that object.

Efforts for the promotion of education are specially encouraged by enlightened magistrates. Recently, over three hundred new schools were reported as opened in one department of the province of Canton as the result of official influence, but not at government expense. The Emperor, too, has a way of bringing his influence to bear on this object without drawing a farthing from his exchequer. I shall mention three instances by way of illustration.

Last year, in Shantung, a man of literary standing contributed four acres of ground for the establishment of a village school. The governor recommended him to the notice of the Emperor, and His Majesty conferred on him the titular rank of professor in the *Kicotszekien* or Confucian college.

Three or four years ago, in the province of Hupeh, a retired officer of

the grade of *Tautai*, or intendant of circuit, contributed twenty thousand taels for the endowment of a college at Wuchang. The Viceroy Li-Hung-Chang reporting to the throne this act of munificence, the Chinese Peabody was rewarded by the privilege of wearing a red button instead of a blue one and inscribing on his card the title of provincial judge.

The third instance is that of a college in Kwei-Lin-Foo, the capital of Quangsi. Falling into decay and ruin during the long years of the Taiping rebellion, the gentry, on the return of peace, raised contributions, repaired the buildings, and started it again in successful operation.

The governor solicits on behalf of these public spirited citizens some marks of the imperial approbation; and His Majesty sends them a laudatory inscription written by the elegant pencils of the Hanlin.

But private effort, however stimulated, is utterly inadequate to the wants of the public. In western countries the enormous exertions of religious societies, prompted as they are by pious zeal enhanced by sectarian rivalry, have always fallen short of the educational necessities of the masses. It is well understood that no system of schools can ever succeed in reaching all classes of the people unless it has its roots in the national revenue.

In China, what with the unavoidable limitation of private effort and the deplorable inefficiency of charity schools, but a small fraction of the youth have the advantages of the most elementary education brought within their reach.

I do not here speak of the almost total absence of schools for girls, for against these the Chinese are principled. The government, having no demand for the services of women in official posts, makes no provision for their education; and popular opinion regards reading and writing as dangerous arts in female hands. If a woman, however, by any chance, emerges from the shaded hemisphere to which social prejudices have consigned her, (*si qua fata aspera rumpat*), she vindicates for herself a position among the historians, poets, or scholars of the land and never fails to be greeted with even more than her proper share of public admiration. Such instances induce indulgent fathers now and then to cultivate the talents of a clever daughter, and occasionally neighborhood schools for the benefit of girls are to be met with; but the Chinese people have yet to learn that the best provision they could make for the primary education of their sons would be to educate the mothers, and that the education of the mothers could not fail to improve the intellectual character of their offspring. But even for the more favored sex the facilities for obtaining an education are sadly deficient; only a small percentage of the youth attend school, and, owing to the absurd method which we have described, few of them advance far enough to be initiated into the mysteries of ideography.

On this subject a false impression has gone abroad. We hear it as-

serted that "education is universal in China; even coolies are taught to read and write." In one sense this is true, but not as we understand the terms "reading and writing." In the alphabetical vernaculars of the west, the ability to read and write implies the ability to express one's thoughts by the pen and to grasp the thoughts of others when so expressed. In Chinese, and especially in the classical or book language, it implies nothing of the sort. A shopkeeper may be able to write the numbers and keep accounts without being able to write anything else; and a lad who has attended school for several years will pronounce the characters of an ordinary book with faultless precision, yet not comprehend the meaning of a single sentence. Of those who can read understandingly, (and nothing else ought to be called reading,) the proportion is greater in towns than in rural districts. But striking an average, it does not, according to my observation, exceed one in twenty or the male sex and one in ten thousand, for the female; rather a humiliating exhibit for a country which has maintained for centuries such a magnificent institution as the Hanlin Academy.

With all due allowance for the want of statistical accuracy where no statistics are obtainable, compare this with the educational statistics of the United States as given in the last census, (that of 1870.) Taking the country as a whole, the ratio of illiteracy among persons over ten years of age is 1 in 6; taking the Northern States alone, the ratio is 57 to 1,000, or about 1 in 18.\*

#### 6.—SYSTEM OF EXAMINATIONS.

To some it may be a matter of surprise that popular education is left to take care of itself in a country where letters are held sacred and their inventor enrolled among the gods; to others it may appear equally strange that mental cultivation is so extensively diffused, considering the cumbrous vehicle employed for the transmission of thought and the enormous difficulty of getting command of it. Both phenomena find their solution in the fact that the government does not value education for its own sake but regards it as a means to an end. The great end is the repose of the state; the instruments for securing it are able officers and education is the means for preparing them for the discharge of their duties. This done, an adequate supply of disciplined agents once secured, the education of the people ceases to be an object. The repose of the state, one of the ancient philosophers tells us, might be assured by a process the opposite of popular education. "Fill the people's bellies and empty their minds; cause that they neither know nor desire anything, and you have the secret of a tranquil government." Such is the advice of Laukeun, which I am inclined to take as an utterance of Socratic irony rather than Machiavelian malice. So far from subscribing to it in its literal import the Chinese government holds its officers responsible for the instruction of its subjects in all matters of

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\* Report of the Commissioner of Education, 1871.

duty; and in Chinese society the idea of instruction as the one thing needful has so wrought itself into the forms of speech as to become a wearisome cant. The red card that invites you to an entertainment solicits "instruction." When a friend meets you he apologizes for having so long absented himself from your "instructions;" and in familiar conversation, simple statements and opinions are often received as "precious instruction" by those who do not by any means accept them. It is more to the point to add that one of the classical books denounces it as the greatest of parental faults to bring up a child without instruction. This relates to the moral rather than to the intellectual side of education. The Chinese government does, nevertheless, encourage purely intellectual culture; and it does so in a most decided and effectual manner, viz, by testing attainments and rewarding exertion. In the magnificence of the scale on which it does this, it is unapproached by any other nation on the earth.

Lord Mahon, in his History of England, speaking of the patronage extended to learning in the period preceding Walpole, observes that "though the sovereign was never an Augustus, the minister was always a Mæcenas. Newton became master of the mint; Locke was commissioner of appeals; Steele was commissioner of stamps; Stepney, Prior, and Gray were employed in lucrative and important embassies; Addison was secretary of state; Tickell, secretary in Ireland. Several rich sinecures were bestowed on Congreve and Rowe, on Hughs and Ambrose Phillipps." And he goes on to show how the illiberality of succeeding reigns was atoned for by popular favor, the diffusion of knowledge enabling the people to become the patron of genius and learning.

The Chinese practise none of these three methods. The Emperor, less arbitrary than monarchs of the west, does not feel at liberty to reward an author by official appointments, and his minister has no power to do so. The inefficiency of popular patronage is less to their credit, authors reaping oftentimes much honor and little emolument from their works. But it is something to be able to add that all three are merged in a regulated state patronage, according to which the reward of literary merit is a law of the empire and a right of the people. This brings us to speak of the examination system; not, indeed, a fresh theme, but one which is not yet exhausted. Though not new to the occidental public, these examinations are not properly understood, for the opinion has been gaining ground that their value has been overrated and that they are to be held responsible for all the shortcomings of Chinese intellectual culture. The truth is just the reverse. Those shortcomings (I have not attempted to disguise them) are referable to other causes, while for something like two thousand years this system of literary competition has operated as a stimulating and conservative agency, to which are due, not only the merits of the national education, such as it is, but its very existence. Nor has its political influence been less deep and beneficial. Essentially political in its aims, it has effected far more in the way of

political good than its authors ever ventured to anticipate. By enlarging the liberties of the people it contributes to the strength of the state, and by affording occupation to the restless and aspiring it tends to secure the tranquillity of the public. The safety valve of society, it provides a vent for that ambition and energy which would otherwise burst forth in civil strife and bloody revolution.

These examinations are of two kinds, which we shall distinguish as preofficial and postofficial; the former is the offspring of the latter, which it has outgrown and overshadowed. Their genesis is not difficult to trace; and, paradoxical as it may appear, these literary examinations date back to a period anterior to the rise of literature. The principles that lie at their foundation are found clearly expressed among the received maxims of government under the earliest of the historic dynasties. It was not, however, until the dynasties of the Tang and Sung (618-1120) that these examinations assumed substantially the form in which we now find them. Coming down from the past, with the accretions of many centuries, they have expanded into a system whose machinery is as complex as its proportions are enormous. Its ramifications extend to every district of the empire; and it commands the services of district magistrates, prefects, and other civil functionaries up to governors and viceroys. These are all auxiliary to the regular officers of the literary corporation.

In each district there are two resident examiners, with the title of professor, whose duty it is to keep a register of all competing students and to exercise them from time to time in order to stimulate their efforts and keep them in preparation for the higher examinations in which degrees are conferred. In each province there is one chancellor or superintendent of instruction, who holds office for three years, and is required to visit every district and hold the customary examinations within that time, conferring the first degree on a certain percentage of the candidates. There are, moreover, two special examiners for each province, generally members of the Hanlin, deputed from the capital to conduct the great triennial examination and confer the second degree.

The regular degrees are three:

- 1st. *Siu-tsai* or "Budding talent."
- 2d. *Ku-jin* or "Deserving of promotion."
- 3d. *Tsin-shi* or "Fit for office."

To which may be added, as a fourth degree, the Hanlin, or member of the "Forest of Pencils." The first of these is sometimes compared to the degree of B. A., conferred by colleges and universities; the second to M. A.; and the third to D. C. L. or LL.D. The last is accurately described by membership in the Imperial Academy; always bearing in mind how much a Chinese academy must differ from a similar institution in the west. But so faint is the analogy which the other degrees bear to the literary degrees of western lands that the interchange of terms is sure to lead to misconceptions. Chinese degrees represent

talent, not knowledge; they are conferred by the state, without the intervention of school or college; they carry with them the privileges of official rank; and they are bestowed on no more than a very small percentage of those who engage in competition. With us, on the contrary, they give no official standing; they attest, where they mean anything, acquirements rather than ability; and the number of those who are "plucked" is usually small in comparison with those who are allowed to "pass." But, after all, the new-fledged bachelor of an occidental college, his head crowned with the outlines of universal knowledge, answers quite as nearly to the sprightly *siu-tsai*,

"Whose soul proud science never taught to stray  
Far as the solar walk or milky way,"

as does a western general to the chief of an undisciplined horde of so-called soldiers.

The following report of Panszelien, chancellor of the province of Shantung, though somewhat vague, will give us an idea of the official duties of the chief examiner and the spirit in which he professes to discharge them:

"Your majesty's servant," says the chancellor, "has guarded the seal of office with the utmost vigilance. In every instance where frauds were detected he has handed the offender over to the proper authorities for punishment. In reëxamining the successful, whenever their handwriting disagreed with that of their previous performances he at once expelled them from the hall, without granting a particle of indulgence. He everywhere exhorted the students to aim at the cultivation of a high moral character. In judging of the merit of compositions he followed reason and the established rules. At the close of each examination he addressed the students face to face, exhorting them not to walk in ways of vanity, nor to concern themselves with things foreign to their vocation, but to uphold the credit of scholarship and to seek to maintain or retrieve the literary reputation of their several districts. Besides these occupations, your servant, in passing from place to place, observed that the snow has everywhere exercised a reviving influence; the young wheat is beginning to shoot up; the people are perfectly quiet and well disposed; the price of provisions is moderate; and those who suffered from the recent floods are gradually returning to their forsaken homes. For literary culture, Hinchon stands preëminent, while Tsaochen is equally so in military matters."

This is the whole report, with the exception of certain stereotyped phrases, employed to open and conclude such documents, and a barren catalogue of places and dates. It contains no statistical facts, no statement of the number of candidates, nor the proportion passed; indeed, no information of any kind, except that conveyed in a chance allusion in the closing sentence.

From this we learn that the chancellor is held responsible for examinations in the military art; and it might be inferred that he reviews



the troops and gauges the attainments of the cadets in military history, engineering, tactics, &c.; but nothing of the kind; he sees them draw the bow, hurl the discus, and go through various manœuvres with spear and shield, which have no longer a place in civilized warfare.

The first degree only is conferred by the provincial chancellor, and the happy recipients, fifteen or twenty in each department, or 1 per cent. of the candidates, are decorated with the insignia of rank and admitted to the ground floor of the nine storied pagoda. The trial for the second degree is held in the capital of each province, by special commissioners, once in three years. It consists of three sessions of three days each, making nine days of almost continuous exertion—a strain to the mental and physical powers, to which the infirm and aged frequently succumb.

In addition to composition in prose and verse, the candidate is required to show his acquaintance with history, (the history of China,) philosophy, criticism, and various branches of archæology. Again 1 per cent. is decorated; but it is not until the more fortunate among them succeed in passing the metropolitan triennial that the meed of civil office is certainly bestowed. They are not, however, assigned to their respective offices until they have gone through two special examinations within the palace and in the presence of the emperor. On this occasion the highest on the list is honored with the title of *chuang yuen* or “laureate,” a distinction so great that in the last reign it was not thought unbefitting the daughter of a *chuang yuen* to be raised to the position of consort of the Son of Heaven.

A score of the best are admitted to membership in the Academy, two or three score are attached to it as pupils or probationers, and the rest drafted off to official posts in the capital or in the provinces, the humblest of which is supposed to compensate the occupant for a life of penury and toil.

In conclusion, this noble institution—the civil service competitive system—appears destined to play a conspicuous part in carrying forward an intellectual movement the incipient stages of which are already visible. It has cherished the national education, such as it is; and if it has compelled the mind of China for ages past to grind in the mill of barren imitation, that is not the fault of the system, but its abuse.

When the growing influence of western science animates it with a new spirit, as it must do ere long, we shall see a million or more of patient students applying themselves to scientific studies with all the ardor that now characterizes their literary competition.

Six years ago the viceroy of Fuhkien, now a member of the imperial cabinet, proposed the institution of a competition in mathematics. The suggestion was not adopted; but a few days ago it was brought up in a new form, with the addition of the physical sciences, by Li-Hung-Chang the famous governor of the metropolitan province. When adopted, as it must be, it will place the entire examination system on a new basis

and inaugurate an intellectual revolution whose extent and results it would be difficult to predict.

In remodelling her national education, Japan has begun with her schools, and, however reluctant, China will be compelled to do the same. Thus far her efforts in that direction have been few and feeble, all that she has to show being a couple of schools at Canton and Shanghai, with forty students each, three or four schools in connection with the arsenal at Fuhchow, with an aggregate of three hundred, and in the capital an Imperial College for Western Science, with an attendance of about a hundred.\*

The proposed modifications in the civil service examination system will not only invest each of these schools with a new importance, and give a higher value to every educated youth; it will have the effect of creating for itself a system of schools and colleges on the basis of an existing organization.

In every department and district there is a government school with two or more professors attached. The professors give no instruction, and the students only present themselves at stated times for examination. With the introduction of science these professors will become teachers, and each of these now deserted schools a centre of illumination.

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#### APPENDIX.

HARTFORD, CONN., *March 17, 1876.*

DEAR SIR: Inclosed herewith I beg to hand you a brief report of our Chinese students in this country. I should have written it much earlier had not my time been well taken up by other duties connected with the mission. Should you have any inquiries to make about our students, do not hesitate to put them.

I remain, your obedient servant,

YUNG WING.†

Hon. J. EATON,

*Commissioner of Education, Washington, D. C.*

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Since the statement of January 7, 1873, respecting the arrival in September, 1872, of the first detachment of Chinese government students in this country was published, we have had three more detachments, of thirty students each, who came in succession in the years 1873-'74-'75; thus completing the whole number of one hundred and twenty, as originally determined upon by the Chinese government. These students

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\* The number of students in this institution is limited by the fact that they are on government pay and training for government service. The faculty of instruction consists of eleven professors, seven foreign and four Chinese.

A printing office with six presses has lately been erected in connection with the college, with a view to the printing and circulation of scientific works. These are expected to be supplied in part by the professors and students, who are at present largely occupied with the translation of useful books.

† Mr. Yung Wing is an alumnus of Yale College, (class 1876,) and has received the honorary degree of LL. D.

are located in towns in Connecticut and Massachusetts all along the Connecticut Valley.

The first detachment has been here about three years and a half, up to the 1st of March, 1876; second detachment has been two years and a half; third, one year and a half; and the fourth, only four months.

Most of the first detachment have joined classes in public schools and academies, and are now studying algebra, Greek, and Latin.

It is expected that about three years from now [March, 1876] they will be able to enter colleges and scientific schools. Those of the second and other detachments are still prosecuting their English studies, such as arithmetic, geography, grammar, and history. A few of them have exhibited decided taste for drawing and sketching. Specimens of these, together with manuscripts of written examinations in all their studies, were sent to Hon. B. G. Northrop for the Centennial Exhibition. These papers may be taken as fair evidences of their progress in the different studies since they have been here.

Our students, ever since their arrival, have been favored with good health in a remarkable degree. With the exception of one case of death from scarlet fever in 1875, they have on the whole enjoyed excellent health. Besides the one who died a year ago, we have dismissed four, thus leaving us only one hundred and fifteen students.

There have been some material changes in the mission during the past year. Mr. Chin Lan Pin, one of the commissioners, who returned to China more than a year ago, has been succeeded by Ugen Ugoh Liang; Mr. Kwong Ki Chin has taken the place of Mr. Chan Laisun, translator; and Liu Yun Fong, a young tutor in Chinese, has been added to the staff of teachers.





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*See - August*

43-44





## CONTENTS.

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	Page.
<b>Letter of the Commissioner of Education to the Secretary of the Interior.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Introductory remarks on elementary education in London.....</b>	<b>7-10</b>

### ADDRESS OF SIR CHARLES REED.

<b>School accommodation.....</b>	<b>11-12</b>
<b>Class of children and attendance.....</b>	<b>12-15</b>
<b>School fees.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>The teaching staff.....</b>	<b>15-16</b>
<b>Character of the education given.....</b>	<b>16-19</b>
<b>Physical culture.....</b>	<b>19-20</b>
<b>Discipline.....</b>	<b>20-21</b>
<b>Scholarships.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Deaf and dumb children.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Vagrants and nautical training.....</b>	<b>21-23</b>
<b>Decrease in juvenile crime.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Cost of the system.....</b>	<b>23-24</b>



## LETTER.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION,  
*Washington, D. C., October 30, 1878.*

SIR: It is well known that when the education act of 1870 was adopted by the British Parliament many entertained serious fears with regard to its execution in London.

England up to that date, in the great metropolis as elsewhere, had relied upon the schools of the church for the sufficient education of the young or on endowed schools and other voluntary educational agencies; these being supplemented or aided by grants from the public purse.

Charities in the metropolis were so numerous that the mere catalogue of them alone made a book of two hundred pages; a great many of these charities were devoted to the care or education of the young.

Notwithstanding these numerous and very creditable endeavors, a great increase of those evils specially traceable to the neglect of education was remarked.

The results of the introduction and administration of the law above mentioned are now manifest for the examination of scholars and statesmen. They may be studied in detail in the voluminous reports of the proceedings of the London school board, the sixth volume of which fills 2,200 imperial octavo pages. But Sir Charles Reed, chairman of the London board, recently summarized the facts noted in this great educational experiment in the world's largest city so briefly and in language so simple as to make his statement of peculiar value to the numerous members of municipal school boards in this country. The lessons his words contain are specially pertinent at this time, when efforts are being made in various places to lower our educational methods and plans to the condition in which the London school board found those of that city when it undertook its great responsibilities.

I therefore submit this address, with a few explanatory notes, for publication.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
JOHN EATON,  
*Commissioner.*

Hon. C. SCHURZ,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*

Approved and publication ordered.

C. SCHURZ,  
*Secretary.*  
47-48



## ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN LONDON.

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The last seven years have witnessed a wonderful change in the educational affairs of Great Britain, especially of London and the other large cities. During this time the great metropolis has placed public education on a firm and substantial foundation. Of all the school boards created under the education act of 1870, that of London had the heaviest task imposed upon it, and it is one of those which have accomplished the most. Nothing can be clearer or more forcible than the plain statement of facts and figures presented in the interesting annual address of Sir Charles Reed, the indefatigable president of the London school board. There are already 278 board schools in London, with accommodation for 192,000 children, and when the present plans are completed there will be accommodation in board schools for 240,000 children. It is due to the energetic efforts of the school board that London is able to report in the year 1878 an average daily attendance in all efficient elementary schools of 339,344 pupils, against 174,301 in 1871, a growth of 94.6 per cent. This favorable result in so short a period suggests inquiry into the organization of the school board, its powers, and its plan of operation.

The basis of the present system is the elementary education act of 1870, which says that "there shall be provided for every school district a sufficient amount of accommodation in public elementary schools available for all the children resident in such district for whose elementary education efficient and suitable provision is not otherwise made." The new schools are placed in each district under school boards invested with great powers, among others that of compelling all parents to give their children between the ages of 5 and 13 the advantages of an elementary education.

In pursuance of this act the first school board for London was elected November 29, 1870. It contained many eminent members, among them Professor Huxley. The number of school districts is 10, which are represented in the board by 49 members<sup>1</sup> elected every three years by ballot as required by law. The first chairman of the board was elected December 15, 1870. On December 19 of the same year, the education department directed the board to procure returns of all the elementary schools within the district of the metropolis. These returns were forwarded to the department within four months. On April 20, 1871, the board received instructions to report on the number of children within the limits of its jurisdiction for whom elementary education should be

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<sup>1</sup> A few of the members are women.

provided. As the general census of the United Kingdom had just been taken, it was easy to determine the absolute number of children between the ages of 3 and 13. But a more difficult problem was presented as soon as it became necessary to ascertain the number of children contemplated in the act. A staff of enumerators and a superintendent were appointed in each of the ten divisions of the metropolis. As a general rule the enumerators made their inquiries verbally as they called from house to house. The work of tabulation was at once proceeded with. The board subdivided the different school divisions into compact blocks. Each of the divisional committees was then requested to subdivide its division in accordance with a regular plan, and the result of this is shown in the much admired maps published by the board. The streets and alleys within a given subdivision were now arranged in due order, and the exact number of families noted. The children were then divided into those who attend and those who should attend, and the causes of absence were carefully ascertained.

The following is the result of this gigantic work : The population of London April 2, 1871, according to the school board enumeration, was 3,265,005. The number of children between 3 and 13 was 681,101, of whom 97,307 were educated at home or in schools, and 9,101 were inmates of various institutions. The number of children requiring elementary schools was 574,693, of whom 398,679 were attending and 176,014 for various causes were not attending school.

The first duty of the board was now to provide suitable school accommodation for the vast number of children outside of school. How successfully this has been done will be seen in the statement of Sir Charles Reed, herewith presented. The internal organization of the board schools has improved steadily and systematically from year to year. The board has availed itself of the power given it in section 74 of the education act, which says that any school board may require "the parents of children of such age, not less than five years nor more than thirteen years, as may be fixed by the by-laws, to cause such children (unless there is some reasonable excuse) to attend school," and may "impose penalties for the breach of any by-laws." The text of the by-laws relating to compulsory attendance in London board schools is as follows :

§ 2. The parent of every child of not less than five years nor more than thirteen years of age is required to cause such child to attend school, unless there be some reasonable excuse for non-attendance.

§ 3. Except as hereinafter provided, the time such child is required to attend school is the whole time for which the school selected shall be opened for the instruction of children, not being less than twenty-five hours a week. \* \* \*

§ 7. Every parent who shall not observe or shall neglect or violate these by-laws shall upon conviction be liable to a penalty not exceeding 5s., including costs, for each offence.

According to the reports, the above provisions in regard to compulsion are rigorously enforced. Sir Charles Reed says : "Without this

agency [compulsion] we should lose all trace of thousands of the very children it is our duty to gather into school."

The London school board divides the subjects of instruction into "essential" and "discretionary." The former for junior and senior schools are the Bible and the principles of religion and morality,<sup>1</sup> reading, writing, and arithmetic, English grammar and composition, and the principles of book-keeping in senior schools, with mensuration in senior boys' schools; systematized object lessons, embracing elementary instruction in physical science, history of England, elementary geography, elementary social economy, elementary drawing, music and drill. In girls' schools, plain needlework and cutting out are added. The discretionary branches are domestic economy, algebra, and geometry.

For infant schools, instruction must be given in the Bible and the principles of religion and morality, reading, writing, and arithmetic, object lessons of a simple character, singing, physical exercises, and sewing.

One or more mistresses in every girls' school must be competent to teach cookery. The school management committee says in regard to this instruction:

The number of pupils in the different cookery classes, March 25, 1878, was as follows:	
Sleaford street centre.....	46
Chalton street centre.....	50
Blackheath road centre.....	42
Cambridge Heath road centre.....	63
Total.....	201

A great number of applicants had to be refused on account of want of space. The teachers' interest in cookery has steadily increased, and many of them have expressed a great wish to teach it in their schools.

In every department of a school there must be at least one teacher with a full drawing certificate. Two hours a week in all boys' schools and one and a half hours a week in every girls' school must be devoted to drawing. Drill is taught in every school during the regular school hours, and it is expected that every head teacher will be competent to give this instruction.

The London school board regards with great favor the effort to make swimming lessons a part of the course in physical training in the schools under its control. The many recent accidents on water have given a new impetus to this important movement. Hitherto the London Swimming Club has taught the art to a large number of children of the board schools. The number of pupils and teachers who have already learned to swim is 7,577.

The board has greatly stimulated a spirit of temperance and thrift

<sup>1</sup> This religious instruction, however, is to be given either before or after (or before and after) the regular session of the school, and any child may be withdrawn during its continuance; if withdrawn, the child must receive instruction in secular subjects during that time.



among the children by furnishing lectures on this subject and by giving facility for the deposit of money with the National Penny Savings Bank. The number of depositors in 1877 was 9,601, and the amount deposited by forty schools was 3,112*l.* 1*s.* 10*d.*

The board also takes care of the deaf-mute and blind children within its jurisdiction. The number of institutions for these unfortunates is five and the number of inmates 134.

## ADDRESS OF SIR CHARLES REED.

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The first meeting of the London school board after the autumnal recess was held on Wednesday, October 2, 1878, Sir Charles Reed, chairman, presiding. The chairman said :

I again avail myself of the opportunity afforded by our reassembling after the recess to present a brief review of the work of the board for the past year, mainly for the information of our fellow citizens, whose representatives we are and at whose expense, in chief part, the education of the poorer children of the metropolis is carried on. They may justly desire to be satisfied on the following points: 1. That school accommodation is sufficient, but not excessive; 2. That the proper class of children is found in our schools, and that their attendance is regular; 3. That the teaching staff is adequate; 4. That the education given is plain, yet thorough; and, under each head, that the results have been attained at a reasonable cost.

### SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION.

At the present time the board has under its control 278 schools, with 704 departments; of these, 187 are permanent schools, 43 are held in temporary buildings, and 48 have been transferred to the board. These schools give accommodation for 192,000 children. This is an increase upon my last report of 36 schools, 112 departments, and 29,092 places.

Till recently we have followed our enumeration of 1871, which showed the number of children in the metropolis requiring elementary education to be 574,693. This year we have for greater accuracy rescheduled the various districts, and estimate the number at 614,857. These figures, however, are subject to correction, and are probably considerably below the real number. Of these, the voluntary schools provided at midsummer last for 278,923 and the board for 186,468, so that the entire provision at that time amounted to 465,391 school places. When we have completed works now in progress we shall have raised our share of the supply to 240,000, thus securing a total provision for 518,000 children. Meantime it is a solid gain that London has 203,132 efficient school places more than it had seven years ago, the increase being 77.4 per cent.

While in 46 cases during the past twelve months we have had to enlarge schools, in no instance has the migration of the people left us with excessive accommodation; a fact that speaks well for the care with which the sites have been selected and the moderation with which requirements have been estimated. The cost of sites has of course de-

pended on whether they were purchased in advance of general building or whether the ground had to be cleared of houses. Sites and buildings together have averaged 15*l.* 4*s.* per child, a cost which the Education Department recently informed one of the vestries it could not regard as excessive. The buildings are well adapted for their purpose, although, for the sake of economy, constructed in several stories. One of Her Majesty's inspectors says: "I did not realize how defective the lighting of many voluntary schools was until I came to compare them with the airy, brightly lit chambers of the board schools. This has led to the improvement of the light in several voluntary schools."

#### CLASS OF CHILDREN AND ATTENDANCE.

It is often asserted that we are educating children who ought to be in schools of a higher grade, whereas a reference to the occupations of the parents of our scholars and their inability in most cases to pay higher fees would prove that the great bulk of our children are of the class for whose benefit the board was established. The attendance shows an improvement on previous years. The average number on the roll for the half year ending at midsummer was 192,425, and the average daily attendance 153,819, or 79.9 per cent., the percentage of the voluntary schools of the metropolis for the same period being 77.5.

Taking the first quarter of the year, which is generally the best, we find in the board schools a steady advance. Thus in 1874 the daily average attendance was 70.1; in 1875, 72.7; in 1876, 78.3; in 1877, 80.1; and in 1878, 81.1. Mr. Stokes, Her Majesty's inspector for the Southwark district, says: "Costly as the provision of new board schools may be deemed, justification is found in the large and ready attendance of children. In nearly all cases the new schools have been filled with children quite as speedily as is desirable. And where temporary schools have acted as preparatory feeders for the permanent schools, a full attendance has been secured from the day of opening." At the same time we are far from regarding the present rate of attendance as a goal at which we can rest satisfied; for, while numbers of our children are models of regularity, there are many who cannot be got to school more than two or three times a week. One of our own inspectors says: "I believe one of the hardest problems the board has before it is to get each child to attend regularly in the same school, for at present I fear that very many of the Arabs of the street become only Arabs of the schools." Another speaks more hopefully: "Very few of the scholars now lose the scripture lesson through unpunctuality." In fact, in many schools it commences now at 9.5 instead of 9.15, as allowed by the rules of the board.

This attendance is secured in various ways. The board makes its masters and mistresses responsible for the regularity of their pupils and has empowered them, as an experiment, to send elder scholars to look up absentees. Where parents appreciate the advantages enjoyed by

their children they take an interest in their attendance and send them punctually to school. At the same time the number of apathetic and neglectful parents is such as to render most necessary the labors of our 11 superintendents and 208 visitors, who form our machinery for applying that compulsion in favor of which the country has declared. Addressing ourselves to all but those who have earned by proficiency certificates of exemption and those who have been absent with sufficient cause, these visitors procure the information on which the board proceeds. A caution to parents was issued in the first half of this year to 32,529 parents, with the effect of securing the improved attendance of 24,497 children. A further notice requiring parents to attend divisional committees and explain was issued in 22,738 cases, and in 18,046 of those with good result. The number of summonses we were compelled to take out was 3,705; in 2,340 instances a small fine was imposed; three charges only were dismissed out of the whole number; the rest were dealt with by reference to factory inspectors, industrial schools committees, and other authorities. For the illegitimate employment of children we were called on to serve 183 notices upon employers, or parents as employers. Of these, 153 were complied with and 21 had to be followed up by a summons; in every case the action of the board was sustained by the magistrates. It will be a matter for the early consideration of the by-laws committee what steps should be taken in order to carry out the provisions of the canal boats act, section 6 of which charges the local authority of the place to which they are registered as belonging with seeing that the children on board these boats are being educated.

The process of enforcing the compulsory by-laws is very costly, but it should be remembered that, while the whole expense falls upon the board, the voluntary schools share equally with our own in the benefit. Yet without an agency of the kind described we should lose all trace of thousands of the very children it is our duty to gather into school. Certainly without it we should not be able to report the daily average attendance at all efficient elementary schools in London as increased from the 174,301 of 1871 to the 339,344 of the present year, a growth of 94.6 per cent.

The introduction by the department of the Child's School Book is of undoubted advantage in providing a record of the school life of each child, but considerable expense and labor have been involved in procuring the required certificate of age. Under section 26 of the new act the board was empowered to obtain from the registrars returns of all births in their districts for the current year, but not for previous years; the consequence being that the board was not in a position to obtain these returns, and decided that it must be left to parents to furnish the certificates. This course, however, was found to be beset by many difficulties; and in the end the department has yielded to the representations of the principal school boards in the country, and now permits the

local authority to dispense, if it thinks fit, with the regular certificate of age, and direct a simple entry of age to be made in the School Book by their clerk, or some other specially deputed person. We have therefore deputed to this office our head teachers, and requested the managers of voluntary schools to nominate their head teachers for formal appointment by the board. The clerical work involved in making these entries, and still more in filling up the returns of attendance and examinations required by the department, is in some danger of interfering with the efficiency of our best officers, and reducing them to be superintendents, instead of active and sympathetic teachers. As one has said, "Superintendence is a good thing, but school *mastery* is a better." Upon the returns just referred to, honor certificates are awarded by government to children under 11 years of age who have passed in standards 4, 5, and 6, and made full attendance at the same school for two years.<sup>1</sup> In these cases the department pays (under certain conditions) the fees for three years. Three hundred and five of our scholars have gained these certificates during the past year.

The rewards offered by the board are simply for attendance, and are given to children who attend punctually on every occasion on which their respective schools are open. Such children receive a card at the end of the quarter, and two cards entitle the holder to a book of the value of from one to three shillings. During the first quarter of this year 27,366 cards were earned in this way and 11,542 books. Though as yet we have given only books as prizes, it appears from the recent reply of the local government board in the Over case that it would be prepared to take a liberal view, should we at any time feel it desirable to offer prizes in another form. While speaking of prizes, I may add

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<sup>1</sup> The "standards" or grades here referred to are those prescribed by the general education act of 1870. They are as follows:

STANDARD 1.—*Reading*: A short paragraph from a book used in the school, not confined to words of one syllable. *Writing*: Copy in manuscript character a line of print, and write from dictation a few common words. *Arithmetic*: Simple addition and subtraction of numbers of not more than four figures, and the multiplication table to six times twelve.

STANDARD 2.—*Reading*: A short paragraph from an elementary reading book. *Writing*: A sentence from the same book, slowly read once, and then dictated in single words. *Arithmetic*: Subtraction, multiplication, and short division.

STANDARD 3.—*Reading*: A short paragraph from a more advanced reading book. *Writing*: A sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time from the same book. *Arithmetic*: Long division and compound rules (money).

STANDARD 4.—*Reading*: A few lines of poetry selected by the inspector. *Writing*: A sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time from a reading book. *Arithmetic*: Compound rules (common weights and measures).

\*STANDARD 5.—*Reading*: A short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper or other modern narrative. *Writing*: A short paragraph in a newspaper, or ten lines of verse slowly dictated once by a few words at a time. *Arithmetic*: Practice and bills of parcels.

STANDARD 6.—*Reading*: To read with fluency and expression. *Writing*: A short theme or letter, or an easy paraphrase. *Arithmetic*: Proportion and fractions, vulgar and decimal.

that a special diploma of honor has been awarded to the board by the jury on education at the Paris Exhibition in consideration of the excellence of its work. Particular regard was paid to the success that has attended our efforts for securing the attendance of children, and the example of London in this respect seems likely to be followed in France.

#### SCHOOL FEES.

As regards fees, the amount received in our schools during the year ending Lady-day last was 55,813*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* We have at present 45,933 school places at 1*d.* a week, 91,191 at 2*d.*, 36,335 at 3*d.*, 8,225 at 4*d.*, 2,859 at 6*d.*, and 87 at 9*d.*, being an average of 2*1*/<sub>10</sub>*d.* Where it is found that the position of the parents will permit, the fees are being gradually raised, as the above figures will show when compared with those I gave a year ago; in several instances this has been done at the suggestion of Her Majesty's inspectors. At the same time even the lowest fee is beyond the ability of some, and during the year that ended at midsummer fees were remitted in 3,219 cases, and remission renewed in 2,355 more.

#### THE TEACHING STAFF.

At Lady-day we had in our schools 2,378 adult teachers, of whom 406 held first class certificates and 1,283 second class. These were exclusive of 1,479 pupil teachers and 272 candidates. The relation of these figures to those of the previous year is shown thus :

Quarter ended —	Adult teachers.		Pupil teachers.		Candidates.	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
March, 1878 .....	885	1,493	417	1,062	82	190
March, 1877 .....	647	1,038	445	1,095	71	222
	238 Increase.	455 Increase.	28 Decrease.	33 Decrease.	11 Increase.	32 Decrease.

The increase in adult teachers is accounted for by the greater power required to instruct the advancing numbers of the children. As an example of the staff we employ, I may instance a large school which has been under my own frequent inspection and which earns us a yearly grant of over 1,000*l.* The scholars on the roll are 1,782, of whom there is a daily average attendance of 1,467, or 467 boys, 374 girls, and 626 infants. These are taught by 3 masters and 4 male pupil teachers, 5 mistresses, 2 female ex-pupil teachers, and 5 female pupil teachers; that is, 19 teachers in all—surely no excessive allowance. In the appointment of teachers regard is had to the recommendation of the local managers and to any claim which may arise from good service previously rendered under the board. One of our inspectors says: "During the

past half year 27 masters have been appointed in my district ; of these no less than 18 were assistants in the employment of the board. This is a good proportion, and shows that the interests and claims of assistants are not overlooked. Every one of these appointments has, so far, worked well." It will be one of our first duties this autumn to consider a scheme for revising the scale of salaries of our teachers. While, on the one hand, we shall do well to provide for the more regular promotion of deserving teachers, and the retention in "schools of special difficulty" of those who are meeting those difficulties successfully, we shall bear in mind that no profession has of late years been so rapidly advanced as that of the elementary school teacher, and that a due proportion must be observed between the payment that can be earned in it and in other professions where onerous and intelligent service has to be rendered.

#### CHARACTER OF THE EDUCATION.

The question has frequently been put at the opening of new schools whether we were not giving an education in advance of our duty and equal to that which might be expected in secondary schools. In answer to this it may be said that the instruction in secondary schools is often far below the mark ; and, further, that the great majority of our children are busy over the simple rudiments of learning, as is seen from the fact that at the close of last year 41.5 were in the 1st standard, 25.8 in the 2d, 16.1 in the 3d, and 16.6 in 4th, 5th, and 6th. Mr. Alderson, Her Majesty's inspector, says of the Marylebone district : "A marked feature in school board instruction in its present stage is its limited range. It will be a surprise to many who have credited the London school board with an over-ambitious programme to learn that *elementary school work, nicely executed*, is at present the characteristic 'note' of their operations." Indeed, I fear the charge of backwardness in standard work might rather be brought against us, seeing the proportion of children we present in the three upper standards is but one in six. The same gentleman, however, does us only justice when he adds : "It may well be impossible for a newly opened school, recruited from the streets, to present a fourth of its scholars, or even any at all, in the three higher standards." It is encouraging to know that the upper standards are rapidly increasing, and to believe that our next report will show a marked improvement under this head.

The committee of council on education fix a certain age for each standard, expecting a child of 8 to be presented in the 2d standard, one of 9 in the 3d standard, and so on ; but some consideration must be had for the circumstances of the scholars, it not being likely that a child from a degraded and half-starved family will attain a given degree of proficiency as early as the lad of an intelligent and prosperous mechanic.

The subjects taught in our schools are classified as essential and discretionary, or, according to the division of the code, standard, class, and specific. In standard subjects the percentage of passes last year in

reading was 87, in writing 84, and in arithmetic 79.1. This compares favorably with the percentages for the entire country, which are given as 85.78 for reading, 78.99 for writing, and 69.97 for arithmetic. Mr. Renouf, Her Majesty's inspector, gives in his report a list of unsuccessful schools in the Tower Hamlets, where a percentage of passes falls below 60, and adds: "No board school is found among these. The board schools are conspicuous in the list of those whose percentage reaches 90."

As is well known, Bible instruction with simple religious exercises forms a part of the daily programme in each school; but as the government inspection does not extend to this subject, our judgment of results has to be formed upon our own annual examination. In distributing the prizes this year at the Crystal Palace I took occasion to say—and the vice president of the Privy Council subsequently quoted it in Parliament as a remarkable fact—that the number of children who voluntarily entered the competition this year was 104,909, against 82,062 in 1877. Besides these, 1,403 pupil teachers submitted themselves to examination. While many of their answers are reported to us as having been superficial and betraying a want of thinking power, some were extremely good. Thus, whereas some even of the pupil teachers could find in the parable of the good Samaritan no further lesson than that we should be "kind to people," a boy in the 6th standard summed up the lessons to be gathered in these words: "We learn (1) that those whom we may count as our enemies are often our best friends; (2) that we should love our enemies; (3) that a good action is its own reward: no doubt if a crowd of people had been near, the priest or the Levite would have given help in order to have received the praise of men."

A still better evidence of the comprehension of this parable was given in a collection spontaneously made in a number of our schools for the Indian famine relief fund, when a sum of 435*l.* was sent up from children in 476 departments, the coins in the boxes being almost exclusively halfpence and farthings. While the board would properly discourage systematic appeals to their scholars, the goodwill in this case was so manifest as to make it seem a legitimate part of educational training to allow it to find vent; and I therefore consented to act as treasurer of the fund. One master says: "Not feeling myself justified in opening a subscription list, lest my children might feel constrained by mere emulation to give money which could ill be spared at home, I placed a box at the stair head, and simply allowed the boys to pay in whatever they chose. From the weight of the box I gather that about a pound has been collected, but I forward it unopened." The amount was found to be 2*l.* 10*s.* Another writes: "I wish you had seen the triumphant air of satisfaction with which a black boy of seven years of age gave me a halfpenny. 'That's for 'em,' he said, and seemed to think that want would be known no more."



Singing is taught universally with good results, both as regards the ability to read music and the quality of voice. We have also reaffirmed our decision to teach drawing to all our pupils, from a conviction of its great value in every branch of industry. Our annual exhibition of drawings of pupil teachers and scholars has had a stimulating influence on this department of school work. The class subjects required by the code are grammar, history, elementary geography, and (in girls' departments) plain needlework. The introduction of these subjects is stated on all hands to have acted beneficially on the ordinary school course in increasing the intelligence of the children and raising the percentage of passes in standard subjects. How, indeed, can it be other than useful for a child to be able to parse a simple sentence, to know something about the history of his country, and gain some idea of the places about which he reads? The need there is of instruction in the last, at least, of these subjects is illustrated by the remark of an inspector on a "very good girls' school." "It would be well, however, to give the girls some idea of geography, as even in the fifth and sixth standards most of them could not tell me what river flows through London, what country they live in, or the name of any other town in the world." Complaints occasionally reach us that the class subjects are too superficially handled, and it might be well to imitate more closely the interesting and vivid method of teaching adopted in many of the American and German schools. Of the instruction in history in particular, it must be said that it is given in few schools, and, when given, is too often a dry matter of dates and dynasties and battles, instead of the broader view of the growth and progress of our country.

Needlework is a subject which has too long been neglected in the school. Comparatively few domestic servants can darn or mend neatly, or cut out and make their own clothing; while mothers are really capable of properly instructing their daughters in this most useful art. The best inspectors confess to their inability to dispense with "woman's judgment on woman's work;" and it must be a satisfaction to the board to feel that it has had the advantage from the beginning of employing the services of two qualified ladies who are charged with the oversight of this department.

The specific subjects recognized by the code occupy but few of our children, as appears from the small amount of grant earned. Thus, upon the examination of fifty of our schools from January to March last, the grant for standard subjects was 5,755*l.*, for class subjects 2,788*l.* 16*s.*, and for specific subjects only 344*l.* 16*s.* In cases where scholars have reached the fourth standard, and are not withdrawn by their parents, they must proceed, if the board is to earn the government grant, to these specific subjects. Here they will not advance any alarming distance if they get a hundred lines of poetry by heart, though that be called *literature*, or acquire a knowledge of the structure of the human body, though that be dignified by the title of *physiology*. This last subject

is one that is very popular with the children because it is usually well taught, the teachers having at command excellent diagrams and models. Physical geography suffers in many of the schools from no proper idea being given to the children of the way in which the great forces of nature work; and this lack is still more observable in the treatment of domestic economy. Few will grudge a girl some knowledge of this subject, which is simply "food and its preparation, the warming, cleaning, and ventilating of a dwelling, or the rules of health and the management of a sick room, cottage income, expenditure, and savings." The board encourages this subject, and hopes thereby to check those habits of waste which so often impoverish the family of the artisan. The same aim has led us to give instruction in cookery to our mistresses and senior girls. Under the scheme recently adopted by the board, the girls in schools where domestic economy is taken will receive their preparatory lessons from their own teachers, taking a subsequent course in practical cookery at centres in kitchens fitted with the ordinary appliances of a workingman's home.

Thus all the instruction given in our schools is designed to bear distinctly upon the future wellbeing of the children, and to make them, so far as the elementary school can accomplish such a result, honest, intelligent, God-fearing citizens. And when it is asked how far we are prepared to go and by what principles we mean to limit ourselves, our answer is that we shall go no further than the code allows and limit ourselves by what seems essential to the elementary training of the young. It is our business not to initiate, but loyally to follow out the lines prescribed by Parliament. Any subject that can be considered extra is specially paid for as such.

Great improvements have been effected in the infants' departments; and the introduction of the first standard for the elder children, where owing to want of room they cannot be passed forward to the main school, insures their being better prepared when they are able to enter it. The Kindergarten system<sup>1</sup> is coming to be better understood by the teachers, one of our inspectors saying: "Perhaps the most marked advance during the year is shown in the more intelligent method of teaching adopted in the infants' schools. I attribute this very much to a better understanding of the principles of the Kindergarten; the best infant schools are those where the *spirit* of the Kindergarten has been infused into the whole teaching of the schools."

#### PHYSICAL CULTURE.

In the eager discussion of educational questions, it might seem that the physical condition of the young was lost sight of; but it would be

<sup>1</sup> Not the English infant school system, but the system founded by Friedrich Fröbel, the system of playful occupation, designed to precede all other elementary training and to prepare the child for regular instruction by exercising all its powers so as to render it self-active.

a mistake to suppose that the board regarded this as a secondary consideration. The constant ventilation of school and class rooms, the ample supply of pure water for drinking, the adaptation of desks and seats, the periods of recreation, the covered and open playgrounds, the drill and gymnastic apparatus, all bear witness to this care; while the recommendation that some of the playgrounds should be made available under certain conditions for children not belonging to the schools, is a strong proof of our desire to make as many as possible sharers of the advantage. We have no reason for thinking that our children are overtaxed by the work of the school or their home lessons; there is greater danger of the strain telling upon pupil teachers, who, in addition to the instruction they give, have to prepare themselves for examinations.

It has been pleasant, year by year, to report the results of the praiseworthy efforts of the London Schools Swimming Club, an institution deserving generous support. It is not in the power of the board to contribute to its funds, but we reap great advantage from its activity in securing in our public parks and baths places where swimming can be taught. Attention having been recently called to the great importance of this art, it may be of interest to state that this club has, without a penny of cost to the ratepayers, taught 7,577 children and teachers how to swim, and that this season there were enrolled 1,600 children, 105 being girls, and 120 female teachers. It need hardly be said that the suggestion that we should erect swimming baths in connection with our largest schools would carry us far beyond the line of our duty; but it may be hoped that some encouragement may be given by government to this branch of physical training.

The interest taken by the board in the scholars is further shown by instruction being given by approved lectures in the advantages of temperance and thrift. Though we have established no savings bank of our own, we have given facility for the deposit of money with the National Penny Savings Bank; and, taking forty schools in various parts of London, the number of depositors in 1877 was 9,601; the amount deposited, 3,112*l.* 1*s.* 10*d.*

It has been the work of a committee during the past year to select with great care books for the libraries which are now connected with every school. These are different in each case, and are passed on every six months from school to school and centre to centre through our ten districts, so that a constant and fresh supply of healthy reading is supplied for the use of the elder children.

#### DISCIPLINE.

It is satisfactory to be assured on all hands, not only by those who take part in the work of the board, but from the testimony of those outside, that the tone and discipline of the children in school are good, and that their behavior in the playground and in the street is perceptibly

improved. The recent discussions on the question of punishment make it important for me to note that our inspectors report corporal punishment as being extremely rare. "It is very gratifying," says one, "to be in a position to state that corporal punishment has been actually abolished in 28 departments in my district; in fact, it has been practically abolished in the great majority of girls' and infants' schools. It ought to be known that the head teacher alone has the power to inflict it, and that every case is reported to the board," and he gives it as his experience that the abolition of corporal punishment generally means the improvement of the character of both tone and discipline.

#### SCHOLARSHIPS.

With increasing numbers, we greatly lack those rewards in the shape of scholarships which enable parents to continue to promising children the great benefit of advanced instruction. These can be supplied only by private munificence. Within the last year we have received 4 additional scholarships, of which I feel bound to mention 2 from the Drapers' Company,<sup>1</sup> besides 9 already given by that body; making in all 43 scholarships, of which 13 are for girls and the rest for boys. It will thus be seen that we have done our part toward opening the way for girls to secure the honors to which by merit they may be fairly entitled. In the case of our first boy scholar, who is now passing through the City of London School with the utmost distinction, we have an instance of the incalculable advantage such aid may be to those who, in humble life, are endowed with great natural ability. The promise, on the part of the government, of a commission to inquire into and report upon the parochial charities of the metropolis affords a prospect of future help in this direction, though not so speedy as to hinder private benevolence.

Separate provision has to be made for special classes. Thus, half time scholars are received and taught in two convenient centres, and with marked success, as is seen by the high attendance recorded. In Bethnal-green, out of 470 on the roll 436 are in average daily attendance, and in Stepney 130 out of 150. It is proposed to open a similar school in Southwark.

#### DEAF AND DUMB CHILDREN.

Of deaf and dumb children we have an attendance of 134 at four centres, and a fifth is about to be added. These are taught for the most part upon the oral system, but the board is carefully observing the results of experiments in this and the more familiar system of signs. The same may be said with regard to the instruction of the blind, some forty of whom are at present under the care of a special teacher.

#### VAGRANTS AND NAUTICAL TRAINING.

It is not, however, the blind or dumb who give us the greatest care, but the vagrant class. It is perhaps vain to hope for a much larger

<sup>1</sup> An association of drapers, founded in the year 1735. This company is widely known for its liberality in supporting its own needy members, and for its large contributions to educational purposes.

measure of success in dealing with this class so long as the dwellings of the poor remain what they are. Our visitors have to work daily in places of which it has been said that "an army of apostles would be beaten by the ordinary conditions of life in these back slums." Yet these men and women have succeeded in scheduling the houses and drawing the children to school, but only to have to return day after day to these "lazar houses of modern life." It can, however, no longer be said that the streets of London are infested by large numbers of "children for whom nobody cares, until they commit crime and become an active danger to the community." The names of all are known to our officers and registered by them, and their training in the arts of crime is successfully hindered. The children of prisoners under sentence, who are generally illegitimate, are at once dealt with and placed beyond the reach of evil associates, in schools of industry, where they are fitted for honest work and a virtuous course of life. The returns of the industrial schools<sup>1</sup> in England and Wales show that of the boys who are rescued 82 per cent. do well and 81 of the girls; while 4 per cent. of boys and 10 of girls are doubtful. Our own returns are somewhat more favorable. We have taken off the streets up to midsummer last 8,508 homeless and destitute, orphan, and lawless children. Of these 1,038 have been restored to friends or put into situations, while 4,162 have been sent to industrial schools and training ships, the rest being referred for supervision to various local officers; in a few cases the magistrates have been obliged to discharge children, owing to the lack of vacancies in industrial schools at the disposal of the board. Our school at Brentwood is quite full with 104 boys, who remain, as a general rule, up to the age of sixteen; while on board the Shaftesbury and other training ships round the coast are 449 boys who are not treated as criminals, but trained like children of happier antecedents; their condition being the subject of periodical inspection. In addition to these, there are 293 children who have been sent to sea or otherwise provided for. A question was asked at the close of the session in the House of Lords which makes it necessary for me to explain that in purchasing a training ship we acted under powers given us in working the industrial schools act, and that our reasons for procuring a vessel of our own were the great distances to which children had to be sent when they were distributed in ships all round the coast, the difficulty of exercising due control and inspection, and the costliness of the plan. Hence, the admiralty having been unable to grant us the loan of a vessel, the Nubia was purchased from the Peninsular and Oriental Company, named by resolution of the board the Shaftesbury; and now, after being properly fitted for 350 boys, she

<sup>1</sup> In England the name "industrial school" is usually restricted to a school or training ship for neglected children, and for those whose insubordination or other bad habits the school managers have reason to believe may be cured by a few weeks or months of firm and humane discipline. The training in manual labor or industrial pursuits constitutes a prominent feature of the plan of instruction of these institutions.

lies in her moorings off Grays. If it be urged that the cost of a three years' training in an industrial school or on board ship is great, we have two replies: (1) that to leave these children to grow up in crime would cost the country ten times as much; and (2) that, with a view to reduce the outlay where possible, we have sought to provide a special school for truants and unmanageable boys. For this purpose we have had prepared, with the sanction of the government, a school at Homerton, designed to meet the case of lads, chiefly fatherless, whose insubordination we had reason to believe might be cured by a few weeks of firm and humane discipline, thereby avoiding the needless expense of sending them to an industrial school for a term of years. Technical objections, however, having been raised, an application is now before the home secretary to certify it as an ordinary industrial school; it being understood that it is to be reserved for cases arising under section 12 of the new act.

#### DECREASE IN JUVENILE CRIME.

The acknowledged diminution in juvenile crime in the metropolis, of which I spoke last year, may fairly be traced in part to our withdrawal of so many children from the streets. In the whole of London, the number of arrests on suspicion of children under sixteen was, in 1877-'78, 294 boys and 60 girls, being the smallest number for simple larceny within the decade. From the governor of the county jail at Newington I learn that the prisoners between the ages of 5 and 14 received during the past 8 years have gradually diminished from 367 in 1870 to 146 in 1877, while the governor of Holloway jail informs me this week that juvenile crime has been brought, so far as his observation goes, to a minimum, there being in his charge but one girl of school age. We do not indeed suppose instruction will, in itself, suffice to work moral reformation; yet it is noteworthy how closely ignorance and crime do keep together. In 1877 there were arrested 75,250 persons who could either not read and write at all, or could do so only with great difficulty; while only 2,732 were arrested who could read and write well.

#### COST OF THE SYSTEM.

The great heads of our current expenditure are school maintenance, which for the year ended March 25 last required a sum of 245,356*l.* 7*s.* 1*d.*, the operation of the compulsory by-laws 26,623*l.* 17*s.* 8*d.*, and industrial schools and training ships 23,152*l.* 12*s.* 3*d.* Office expenses were under 4 per cent. of the total expenditure, and legal expenses, connected chiefly with acquiring sites, less than 1 per cent. This is apart from the interest on and repayment of loans, and the capital expenditure incurred in the erection of permanent schools. As some misunderstanding has been caused by our proposal to provide a working capital by borrowing from the Metropolitan Board of Works a sum to be repaid in fifty annual instalments, it may be well to quote the reply sent by the

Education Department to a memorial addressed to it by the parish of St. George, Hanover-square :

Your vestry are doubtless aware that the proposal of the school board to provide a working capital by borrowing 75,000*l.* arises from the difficulty which some of the rating authorities experience in meeting the demands of the board within a reasonable time after the precepts are issued, and from a desire on the part of the board to discontinue the practice—which they are advised is illegal—of borrowing from time to time of their treasurer. My lords note that, in the estimate of the expenses of the board for 1878-79, the precepts unpaid on December 31, 1877, amounted to no less a sum than 143,103*l.*, or more than a fourth part of the sum annually required from the rating authorities.

Our sources of income arise from the government grant earned by our scholars, amounting for the past year to 91,331*l.* 8*s.*, giving an average grant per child of 12*s.* 10*d.* School fees, as already noticed, add 55,813*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*, while the amount received for 74 schools hired for Sunday and evening classes has been 1,142*l.* 14*s.* Our chief dependence, however, must be on the rate, which stands at 5½*d.* Although this year we have been able to keep down the rate and even practically reduced it, the working of the compulsory by-laws and the industrial schools act throws upon us so heavy a burden, outside our ordinary work of school provision and maintenance, that we dare not hold out the prospect of speedy relief being found possible. In the letter of the Education Department before referred to, the closing sentence is this :

Looking to the heavy deficiency in the school accommodation which had to be supplied by the action of the School Board for London, and bearing in mind that salaries and wages are necessarily higher in London than in the country, my lords are of opinion that the sum per pound of the ratable value paid by the ratepayers toward the expenses of the board compares not unfavorably with the sum paid by the ratepayers in the country.

We believe also that our constituents will remember, as was recently said, that “an education rate is in the nature of an insurance against future and menacing evils which we ought to be very well content to pay. It is not like the poor rate, which, however necessary it may be, is an evil necessity at the best, and indicates a dead weight of destitution and distress. An education rate, on the other hand, is a charge every penny of which can, and ought to be, expended to profit. Every child we educate, who would otherwise be left in ignorance, is a direct gain to the community.”

It is due to add that we are greatly indebted to the experience and zeal of ladies and gentlemen who act as local managers of our schools and members of our divisional committees ; we shall cordially unite also in recognizing the eminent service rendered by the clerk of the board and our efficient staff. Speaking as I do individually, I need have no hesitation in referring to the steady and earnest work of my colleagues on the board. It is not too much to say that many of them give almost daily attendance of many hours' duration in addition to constant supervision of local work in their own divisions.





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